



# The Bethel Courier.

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 4

WINTER 1985

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 1985 ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN EXCEEDS GOAL

The Society's 1985 endowment campaign raised nearly \$8000 and exceeded the goal of \$7500. The following individuals and businesses (261 in all) made this possible and much gratitude is expressed to them:

Barbara Rich Adams, Lancaster, NH, in memory of Eva Bean & Sarah Ellen Bean Rich; Roger Adams, Jr., W. Simsbury, CT; James and Consuelo Alger, Bethel, in memory of Constance Dyce Alger; William and Patricia Allen, Lake Park, FL; Kimball Ames, Bethel, in memory of Ruth Carver Ames; Olive Anderson, Newry; Ordell H. Anderson, Washington Depot, CT; Ernest and Alberta Angevine, Bethel; Arthur and Ruth Barker, Stafford Springs, CT; Bradley and Judith Barker, Bethel, in memory of Mr. & Mrs. Frank Penley Chapman; Jean Barker, Delray Beach, FL, in memory of Marjorie Noll; Clarence A. Bartlett, Nashua, NH, in memory of Martha Bartlett; Clark and Neda Bartlett, Bethel; John and Mary Beth Bayerlein, Bethel; Ruth T. Bean, Springfield, VT, in memory of Arthur Bean; Donald and Kathy Bennett, Bethel; Lester and Bessie Bennett, Rumford; Bethel Furniture Stock, Bethel; Bethel Savings Bank, Bethel; Bette Edwards Bishop, West Menands, NY, in memory of Rev. Leland Edwards; Charles and Patricia Blake, Bethel; Otto and Kaye Blossy, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, in memory of Clayton Blake; Kenneth and Gwyneth Bohr, Germantown, MD; Benjamin and Lillian Bomhoff, Mendham, NJ; Andrew and Colleen Boyd, West Bethel; Julia B. Brown, Bethel, in memory of Bea and Cecil Conrad; Marie C. Brown, Bethel; Vernon and Maxine Brown, Bethel; Grace Buck, Bethel; Gurdon S. Buck, Watertown, MA, in memory of Carl Tucker; Dr. Richard and Catherine Bush, Belmont, MA; Guy and Nancy Butler, Bethel, in honor of Howard Cole; Don and Mary Calderwood, Mesa, AZ, in memory of Hazel Sanborn Maxson; Carlton G. and Mary Champe, Rumford Center; Frank and Rosalind Chapman, Bethel; Philip and Daphne Chapman, Jr., Peabody, MA, in memory of Hazel Sanborn Maxson; Harold W. Chandler, Live Oak, FL, in honor of Gould Alumni Class of 1914; Richard S. Chandler, Woods Hole, MA; Chapman Inn, Bethel; Charlie's Place, Bethel, in memory of Esther Williamson; Dr. Donald M. Christie, Jr., Poughkeepsie, NY; Ellen Coffin, Norway; Howard and Virginia Cole, Bethel; Wilfred and Eleanor Conary, Bethel, in honor of Howard Brown; Rupert and Eva Conroy, Auburn, in memory of Sylvia Conroy; Clayton and Lola Crockett, Bethel; Joanne Crouse, Danvers, MA; Marjorie F. Cummings, Bethel; Richard and Jean Doherty, Rumford; Dorothy Dorr, West Boothbay, in memory of Enoch Foster; John H. and E. Marie Dudley, Rumford Center; Richard and Carole Duplessis, Bethel; Hugh and Mariann Durgin, Bethel, in memory of John E. Grover; Dana and Barbara Douglass, Jr., Bethel, in memory of Ruth Carver Ames; Dale M. Dyke, Rumford; Rodney and Katheryn Eames, Cape Elizabeth;

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Margaret Hanscom Humphrey poses in front of the Bethel Observer Station on Paradise in 1942.

## BETHEL DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR by Stanley Russell Howe

*EDITOR'S NOTE: An earlier version of this article was delivered at the November 1980 monthly meeting of the Society, commemorating the 35th anniversary of the end of World War II. Since that time it has been extensively revised for inclusion in this (1985) issue. The author wishes to thank all who have generously provided assistance in understanding the history of this important era.*

Bethel in 1941 was a town of 2034 inhabitants who were emerging from the depression of the 1930s with fresh confidence. New businesses were opening, and mills that had been long idle were hiring workers. Small businesses on Main Street were not so numerous as they had been twenty years earlier, but there still remained a variety of shops where one could buy everything from shoes to ice cream. The town library contained 7900 volumes, and Gould Academy was in the midst of expanding its campus with the addition of new buildings, all gifts of William Bingham II (1879-1955). Carrie Wight (1884-1962) was superintendent of schools with an annual salary of \$600. The postmaster at Bethel Hill was Arthur Herrick (1890-1966); at West Bethel it was Paul Head (1898-1980). John Butts was the president of the Chamber of Commerce and the selectmen were Ernest F. Bisbee (1890-1959), Carroll Abbott (1898-1958), and John Howe (1891-1943). Alice Joy Brooks (1890-1954) was town clerk, John Harrington (1896-1983), town treasurer, and Walter Bartlett (1874-1951), tax collector. Bethel was served by its weekly newspaper, the *Citizen*, which since 1927 had been under the ownership of Carl Brown (1893-1963).

Reading the columns of the *Citizen* in the early stages of the ever-enlarging conflict, one would scarcely know that Europe

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(Endowment, continued from page 1)

Donald and Edith Eddy, Bethel, in memory of Marjorie Noll; George and Sylvia Ellis, Andover; Dr. George and Dr. Sharon Eypner, Grafton, MA; Edna E. Fallon, Bethel; Norman K. and Barbara Ferguson, Jr., Hanover; Gerald V. Freeman, Jacksonville, FL; George and Virginia Gamble, Hanover, NH; Arthur and Ruth Gilbert, West Bethel; Goodwin's Inc., Norway; Celia K. Gorman, Bethel; Cynthia Tiffany Gotjen, Bethel; Francis H. and Lillian H. Grant, Gorham, in memory of Joseph A. Hamblen; Paul C. Gray, South Windsor, CT; Ruth and Jaime Grover, Bethel, in memory of John E. Grover; Agnes Haines, Bethel; Ralph and Marion Hall, Bethel; Mildred Hanscom, So. Portland; Frances S. Harding, Bryant Pond; Tom and Carolyn Harrison, Spindale, NC, in memory of Elizabeth E. Wight and in honor of Ruth Verville; Colwyn and Judith Haskell, Bethel; Edward H. Hastings, Milton, MA in memory of Walter Scott; Robert and Florence Hastings, Bethel; Florence B. Hathaway, Needham; John B. and Fumiko I. Head, Bethel; Olive A. Head, West Bethel in memory of Paul B. Head; Dorothea J. Hitzrot, Bethel; Richard and Jane Hosterman, West Bethel; Rodney and Geraldine Howe, Bethel; in memory of Marjorie Noll; Stanley Howe, Bethel, in memory of Marjorie MacArthur Noll, Ruth Carver Ames, Ruth Wilkinson and Walter Scott; Richard Holland, York; Dr. James and Pat Hudson, Bethel; Julie Hudson, Monhegan, in memory of Harkin and Julia Ann Hill Dunton; Harlan and Gertrude Hutchins, Bethel; Lee and Virginia Hutchins, Bethel; Col. Robert and Gertrude Innis, Westborough, MA; Arlan and Eleanor Jodrey, Bethel; Charlotte K. Johnson, Westford, MA, in memory of Albert L. Johnson; Paul and Helen Judkins, Dixfield, in memory of Eva Bean; Paul and Jean Kailey, Bethel; Royden and Alice Keddy, Gorham; Alden and Mabel Kennett, Bethel; Earlon and Mary Keniston, Bethel; Charles and Mary Keoskie, Bethel; John R. King, Lakeland, FL, in memory of Pauline G. King and Harry N. King, Jr.; Frederick and Barbara Kneeland, Cherryfield, in memory of Libbie and Roland Kneeland; Dr. Werner & Irene Kohlmeyer, Bethel; Karl and Helen Kraul, Portland; Brig. Gen. (Ret.) H. M. and Edith Lawrence, Portland; Rev. Clifford W. and Elizabeth Laws, Kittery Point, in memory of Ruth Carver Ames; Daisy M. LeClair, Bethel, in memory of Syl LeClair; E. Louise Lincoln, Bethel; Doris O. Lord, Haines City, FL., in memory of Lawrence Lord; Stanley and Elizabeth Lord, Bethel; Alfred and Stella Lovejoy, Traverse City, MI, in memory of Kenneth Lovejoy; Arlene D. Lowell, Bethel, in memory of Lloyd B. Lowell; H. Paul McGuire and Robin Lee, Bethel; Wendy McGroarty, Bethel, in memory of Grace Eberhardt; Nancy H. Mercer, Bethel; Marilyn Mollicone, Augusta, in memory of Bernice H. Noyes; Helen Morton, Bethel; Herbert H. Morton, III, Andover, MA; Carol Nesius, Chicago, ILL, in memory of William and Abbie Farwell; Hazel H. Newell, Locke Mills, in memory of Marge Noll; George and Danna Nickerson, Bethel; Herbert and Evelyn Nickerson, Bethel; Jack and Lucy Nordahl, Lexington, MA; John and Yvonne Nowlin, Bethel in honor of Randall H. Bennett; Leslie A. Noyes, Bethel; Margaret H. Oakes, Augusta; the Only Place Restaurant, Bethel; Leslie and Christine Otten, Bethel, in honor of Albert Otten; Marvin and Trijntje Ouwinga, Bethel, in memory of Rev. Menko Ouwinga; Elizabeth B. Overton, Brooklin; Earlon and Mary Paine, Bethel;

Dr. John and Jane Payne, Baltimore, MD, in honor of everyone who organized Sudbury-Canada days children's games, Evelyn Peare, Bryant Pond, in memory of Ernest Peare; Dr. Majic and Jeanette Potsaid, Hanover, MA; Geneva M. Pratt, Orono, in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Albert W. Grover; Betty Prescott, Bangor; Kenneth and Sarah Ramage, Bethel; Richard D. Rasc, Bethel, in honor of Charles C. Kennedy; Judith Lovejoy Ray, Austin, TX, in memory of Robert Lovejoy; John and Anne Richardson, Athol, MA, in memory of Benjamin Hastings; Vance and Janet Richardson, Portland; Beatrice R. Ritter, Torrington, CT; Robinson Mfg. Co., Oxford; Dr. Charles and Edith Seashore, Washington, DC; Roxanne T. Sly, Brooklin; C. Gerald and Eugenia Spalding, Tewksbury, MA, in memory of Wallace and Addie Farwell; Clyde and Bertha Stevens, Bethel; Randal and Sarah Stevens, Bethel; Thomas and Dorothy Stevens, East Greenwich, RI; Dr. Robert and Joanne Stewart, Kalamazoo, MI, in memory of William Welcome Peabody; Dexter and Janet Stowell, Bethel; George and Mary Stowell, Falmouth, in memory of Alton Luxton; Glenn E. Swan, Mexico; Douglas Swett, Center Conway, NH; Robert T. Tewksbury, Kerrville, TX; Hope Tibbetts, Bethel; Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Bethel, in memory of Pearl Ashby Tibbetts; Dr. John and Margaret Trinward, Bethel; Edmond and Sudie Vachon, Bethel; Donald and Constance Vautour, Weston, MA, in memory of Ruth Wilkinson; Frank and Jane Vogt, Bethel; Margaret S. Ward, King of Prussia, PA, in memory of the William Farwell Family; Ruth H. Watson, East Sullivan; Millie Wentzell, Bethel; W. J. Wheeler & Co., Inc., South Paris; Maxwell and Elizabeth Whiteman, Elkins Park, PA; Muriel Whitney, Bethel; Walter and Nancy Whittier, Falmouth; Claus and Joan Wiese, Bethel; Ruth W. Wight, Bethel; Stephen and Margaret Wight, Sunday River Inn, Bethel; Dennis Wilson, Bethel; Eleanor L. Wilson, Bryant Pond; Elizabeth Woronzoff, Bethel; Dr. Robert M. and Jeanette G. York, Orrs Island; Archie and Jane Young, Bethel.

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(World War II, continued from page 1)

had been at war since September 1, 1939. These pages were filled with news of fraternal orders, sixty-three parties and church events. It is clear from the evidence (see Margaret Joy Tibbetts' article in the spring 1984 issue of the *Courier*, "Bethel During the Great Depression") that the depressed times of the 1930s had taken a toll upon the town despite the fact that the suffering was not so obvious as it was in other parts of the nation. The value of Bethel's real estate between 1930 and 1940, for example, actually decreased by nearly \$200,000 so it can be determined solely from a dollar measure the Great Depression had exacted a cost to say nothing of the silent misery endured by some of the town's populace. By 1941, however, the mills which had operated at reduced levels throughout much of the previous decade had begun to prosper.

Equally significant from the employment standpoint was the fact that quite a number of Bethel people spent the war years in places such as Bath, Portland and South Portland, where there was great demand for labor (and high wages) in the defense industries. Among Bethel people who worked in coastal defense plants were Herbert Rowe, Malcolm Farwell, Ernest Mundt, Malcolm Mundt, Guy Gibbs, and Robert Kirk.

All of these employment opportunities were good news for many Bethel people whose livelihood depended directly on these economic activities and their effect on others, including the shop owners, who more indirectly benefitted. In September 1939, the war seemed thoroughly remote with little possibility of its touching the lives of Bethel people. It was not until the following year that the *Citizen* began to report on events connected with the hostilities in Europe.

### EDITOR'S CORNER

Included in this issue is a list of items available in the Society's store. There have been many requests for such a list and it has been decided to make this a regular part of the *Courier*. I hope it proves useful to readers in keeping up with Society publications and products.

SRH



Among the first instances of contact with the war were the reports made by Arthur Herrick's daughter Kathryn, who in a series of letters to the editor discussed conditions in wartime London, Paris, and other parts of the Continent. About the same time in Bethel, the American Red Cross began a campaign to provide relief following the invasion of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg in May 1940. A house-to-house canvas for funds, with Ernest Bisbee serving as treasurer, attempted to raise \$200. In July, the *Citizen* announced that the quota still had not been met, and editor Carl Brown wondered aloud why this was so. Apparently the war was still not of primary concern to many Bethel people. During this period, the *Citizen* began publishing syndicated columns on war preparedness, and Eugene Van Den Kerckhoven (1900-1961), owner of the telephone company and a World War I veteran, lead the drive to recruit candidates for the army reserve in Bethel.

By the fall of 1940 a call went out for men ages 21 to 36 to report to Odeon Hall to register for possible service. Town Clerk Alice Brooks registered some 238 men during the month of October, one hundred less than anticipated, but a number that appeared to reflect national percentages. A lottery was announced that would later decide the order of call-up. One further indication of the concern for increased security was the fact that the border patrol was now stationed in Bethel (and would be for the war's duration) in order to check traffic to the Canadian border.

By November 1940, the *Citizen* carried Republican party advertisements appealing to Bethel voters' patriotic sentiments regarding the sacred right to vote and emphasizing how many in Europe were now denied that privilege. GOP candidate Wendell Wilkie handily won Bethel with 524 votes to 287 for President Roosevelt, and two votes were cast for the Communist candidate for the presidency, Earl Bowker.

At the beginning of 1941 Sidney Dyke (1912-1966) enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force as an instructor. Vernon Brown was drafted into the service on January 23, 1941. In the East Bethel column of the *Citizen* appeared news that Clarence Decatur Howe (1886-1960), whose parents were natives of that community, had arrived safely in England after his ship "Western Prince" was torpedoed by a German submarine. Howe, Minister of Munitions and Supply in the cabinet of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, had sent photographs relating to the episode to his uncle, George K. Hastings (1863-1944) in East Bethel.

In March 1941, the first group of draftees from Bethel were called: A. Lincoln Merrill, Donald S. Brown, Stanley C. Carter, Harris Tyler, Gasta M. Lantendresse and George A. Parsons. With this news, the *Citizen* began printing news of selectees, promotions, transfers, discharges and furloughs.

By May 1941, there appeared in Bethel the first notices for defense bonds and postal savings stamps. During the Memorial Day exercises Elwood F. Ireland, Gould Academy Headmaster, presented the address, stressing the grim world situation. Also occurring at this time was the first plea for USO funds.

During the summer of 1941, it was announced that an oil pipeline between Portland, Maine and Montreal, Quebec would be built as a defensive measure. Since it would pass through Bethel there was much interest. Described as the largest project to occur in the Bethel area since the building of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad in the 1850s, the pipeline was completed in the fall of 1941.

In July 1941 the town was stunned by the news that Ashby  
(continued on page 5)

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

At the December meeting of the Board of Trustees, it was voted to establish a long-range planning committee to look at the Society's future needs for the remainder of the 1980s, into the 1990s and beyond to suggest future directions that might be taken. The committee will be meeting during 1986 and anyone with suggestions should pass them on to the committee, the trustees or the director. As the Society begins its twentieth year of existence, it is important to have everyone's opinion concerning the future of our organization.

Alden T. Kennett

## OUR READERS WRITE

Mary Sanborn Calderwood, Mesa, AZ: "In reading the latest *Courier*, I read about the John Burbank place. It might interest you to know Faye's (Taylor) first art lessons were here with Mrs. Burbank in the 20's and she was possibly one of her first pupils."

John Ballentine, Somersworth, NH: "... As always, as an officer of our own historical group, I devour your *Courier* and admire the substantive material you either write yourself or solicit."

J. Maynard Austin, Bennington, VT: "The Chapman Street article was great!"



Sudie Vachon

## MEMBER PROFILE

Sudie L. Vachon was born January 6, 1911 on her family's plantation in Aiken County, South Carolina. Here she came naturally to love plant and bird life, accumulating an impressive knowledge of each during her youth and adult years.

In 1931, she married Edmond J. Vachon, now retired Headmaster of Gould Academy. Their son Paul married Arlene Gray of Windham, Maine and they have two sons. In her role as hostess to many functions in connection with her husband's career, Sudie always provided special and creative flower arrangements which contributed immensely to the success and beauty of many school, church and civic affairs.

Sudie is a life member of the Society and has headed its Garden and Grounds Committee since the Dr. Moses Mason House opened to the public in 1974. Mrs. Vachon deserves much credit along with the volunteers who work under her leadership for ensuring each season the beauty of the gardens and grounds for all to enjoy.

## SOCIETY SALES DEPARTMENT

The Society maintains a selection of modestly priced gifts and historical publications. These may be ordered at the prices listed below. Maine residents should include 5% sales tax. Orders under \$10 should include \$1 for postage and handling; those over \$10 but under \$20 should include \$2 and all those over \$20 should include \$3 for postage and handling.

Moses Mason House Tile \$3.50  
Stationery (package of ten sheets and ten envelopes) \$2 each

Moses Mason House  
Summer House  
Bethel Railroad Station

### Booklets

"Bethel's Broad Street" 75¢  
"The Family Farm" 75¢  
"Made in Bethel" 75¢  
"Dr. Moses Mason and His House" \$1  
"Molly Ockett" \$2

### Maps and Atlases

1880 Map of Bethel Hill \$2  
1880 Map of Entire Town (Bethel) \$2  
1878 Bird's Eye View of Bethel Hill \$1  
1858 Atlas of Oxford County \$6.50

Wood Tote (canvas) \$12.50

Tote Bag (Moses Mason Museum logo) \$7.50

Placemats, 4 Season (set of four) \$7.50

### Special Editions

Bethel Citizen (1974) \$1  
Indian Raid '81 \$1

### Books

D. B. Wight, WILD RIVER WILDERNESS \$4  
Francis Parkman, THE GOULD ACADEMY STORY \$7.50  
Ruth Crosby, I WAS A SUMMER BOARDER \$3.50  
Ruth Crosby, FROM AN OLD LEATHER TRUNK \$3.50  
BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY COOKBOOK \$5  
Thomas Hubka, BIG HOUSE, LITTLE HOUSE, BACK HOUSE  
BARN: THE CONNECTED FARM BUILDINGS OF NEW ENGLAND

Paper \$19.95  
Cloth \$29.95

Jean Lipman, RUFUS PORTER REDISCOVERED \$12.95

A TRUTHFUL LIKENESS: CHESTER HARDING AND HIS PORTRAITS \$25

Paula Wight, NEWRY PROFILES \$5

Eva Bean, EAST BETHEL ROAD, \$45 until June 1 (after June 1, \$50)

William B. Lapham, HISTORY OF BETHEL, 1768-1890 \$45 (available summer 1986)

Bethel Historical Society Calendar, 1986 (half-price) \$2

### T-Shirts

Moses Mason Museum (Adult) (S,M,L,XL) \$6  
Moses Mason Museum (Child's) (4-6-8-10-12-14) \$5  
Sudbury Canada (Adult) (S,M,L,XL) 1768-1796 \$6  
Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Child's) (4-6-8-10-12-14) \$5

Post Cards: Dr. Mason, Agnes Mason,

Moses Mason House 10¢ ea.

Members of the Bethel Historical Society are entitled to a 10% discount for purchases totaling \$10 or more. Please send orders to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217. They will be sent by return mail.



*Thomas C. Hubka, author of Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England (second from left) chats while seated on the steps of the Middle Intervale Meeting House with Albert Foster (left) and Leslie Noyes, following the tour of East Bethel farms. Also shown in the photo are Society members Robert D. Hastings and Kenneth Bohr. The tour on October 27 was the final event in a three day conference attended by nearly 100 from throughout the northeast on Rural Reform and Improvement. Hosted by the Society in cooperation with the Brick Store Museum of Kennebunk, which organized the event and the accompanying exhibit, "A Good Stand of Buildings: Improvement and Reform of the 19th Century Maine Farm," the conference brought to Bethel some of the leading authorities in the field and covered such topics as pastoralism and architectural reform. The exhibit will be featured in the meeting room of the Dr. Moses Mason House from October 15, 1985 to January 25, 1986.*

(World War II, continued from page 3)

Tibbetts, son of World War I veteran Dr. Raymond R. Tibbetts (1875-1958), had been killed in Canada, where he had joined the Royal Canadian Air Force. During his funeral services in Bethel, offices and shops were closed in tribute to his memory.

By the summer of 1941 a number of things happened to bring the war closer to everyone's grasp. A food stamp plan was imposed, and the first plea appeared in the *Citizen* for saving scrap aluminum. A column "This Week in Defense" became a regular part of the town's newspaper, and army recruiters held sessions each Wednesday afternoon in Odeon Hall.

In the fall, efforts were made to form a home guard by the American Legion. "Captain" Leslie Coburn (1898-1959) was selected as commander, and a call was issued for 17 to 60 year-old men to enroll as a measure of preparedness in case the nation should become involved in the war. Fifty men were necessary to form a company; by October 1941 this goal had been realized and was followed by the election of officers.

By this time, the regulations dealing with the Office of Civilian Defense had begun to take shape. Nothing of the level of silliness reported on the national level in such histories of the

era as Adolphe A. Hoehling's *Home Front, U.S.A.* appears to have been the case in Bethel. Leadership in this town seems to have been undeniably so practical that the excesses that marked the national direction of the OCD were not in evidence here. Bethel hardware store owner D. Grover Brooks (1892-1955) headed Bethel's civil defense program and in December 1941 was also named chief air raid warden. He was a respected citizen as were most of those involved in Bethel's civilian defense program. They were listened to by their fellow townspeople in marked contrast to the OCD in Washington which by 1944 was largely discredited by the public and Congress.

In October 1941, the American Red Cross appealed for sewing machines for work on shirts to assist with relief work. In November, the British War Relief Campaign was organized in Bethel. Card parties were held to raise funds, and barrels were placed around Bethel shops to collect items useful to this effort. Yarn was also collected at Allen's Shoe Store on Main Street.

As winter approached the activities of the Home Guard intensified. They drilled two evenings per week in the upper hose house until their growing numbers forced movement to the former Grange Hall building on Spring Street (known as Pattee's Hall in the 19th century) in December 1941. There were frequent pleas in the *Citizen* for recruits, but with no pay, a physical examination and some expense for inducements, there appeared little to offer recruits except feelings of patriotic pride and sense of duty. These apparently worked for a time, but with no United States involvement in the war, questions arose as to the extent that this patriotic fervor could be maintained.

Waiting for U.S. entry into the war was not to be long for on December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. On board the U.S.S. Oklahoma was a Bethel man Stanley Allen, who was killed and whose name was later (1945) added to the local American Legion post. Also in the line of fire were the following Bethel men who survived the attack: Christino Onofrio, Willard Thayer and Carl Tucker (Hickham Field); Harold Young and Henry Robertson (Schofield Barracks); Charles Chapin (Wheeler Field).

The next day the United States declared war on Japan, and the defense effort in Bethel came alive. Almost immediately a Red Cross drive for \$1200 was on, and Central Maine Power Company issued a request that there be no holiday street lighting because of the increased defense load.

At Gould Academy during the war years there were worries about keeping dormitories full, but these proved in the end needless. Gas rationing disrupted sports schedules, but interscholastic competition was not completely abandoned. The track team won the county championship in 1942, and the basketball team achieved the same honors in 1944. In 1943, Gould officials cancelled its entire basketball and winter sports schedule. An aviation school was established at the Academy under the leadership of Alfred J. Fortier, and students were active in bond drives, raising \$10,000 in bonds and stamps in just one week. Edmond J. Vachon, then a teacher of French at the Academy, administered tests for the army and navy to students. Several faculty members left for the service during the war: Edmond Vachon, George Bowhay, Howard P. Chivers, Robert T. Bateman and Paul Hunsicker. In all some 370 Gould graduates (18 of them women) served in the armed services during World War II. Eighteen of them died in their nation's defense. The *Academy Herald* for the period contains few references to the war, but the catalog of the period was more direct in addressing the challenge of the conflict:

On the basis of the best advice available, the Academy sees no reason to change radically its regular courses of study for the coming year. High ranking Army and Navy officers emphasize the continuing need of young men who are physically fit and who have a thorough education in the basic secondary school subjects. The nation is depending and will continue to depend upon such young men for its officer material.

The catalog continued with the institution's more immediate aims:

Next year the Academy will offer to the older students, on a voluntary basis, such elementary pre-aviation training as has been proved valuable. Plans are to provide instruction by members of the staff in such matters of military importance as lend themselves to classroom teaching: navigation, applied mathematics, range finding, radio communication, map making and reading, meteorology, current European and world history, war problems, economics, and photography.

Finally, the catalog summed up the Academy's emphasis on physical strength which it declared would "receive more careful emphasis than ever before."

Of all the Gould graduates in the army probably none had as distinguished a career as James D. Alger, class of 1930 and West Point graduate, who was one of the first overseas as a lieutenant colonel in charge of a tank battalion. He was in the first battle fought by American forces overseas at the Kasserine Pass in North Africa. Taken prisoner there, he spent the better part of the war in a German prisoner-of-war camp. The *Citizen* frequently had an article mentioning the fact that Alger was still in the hands of the Germans.

In April 1942, the *Citizen* announced the first shipment of cigarettes from Bethel to servicemen. This one went to Stanley Carter (1917-1970) in Shelby, Mississippi. Later that month it was announced that Paul Thurston, prominent businessman and resident of Bethel, had been appointed as the Oxford County chairman of Civil Defense.

By May 1942, gas rationing was fully in effect. Sugar consumption was also severely curtailed. Fat was to be turned into the Legion Hall for use in the war effort, and the air raid practice signals were announced at this time ten short rings on the telephone announced an alert with one long ring providing the all-clear signal.

The following month 123 people were fingerprinted at Odeon Hall. More veterans were encouraged by the American Legion post in Bethel to join the Legion and to display the flag throughout the duration of the war. Marriage was no longer a barrier for war service. All enlistments were now extended to the end of the war plus six months.

In January 1942, Maine was declared a danger zone because of its proximity to Europe. Civil Defense operations were organized with some two hundred responding to the leadership of First Selectman Bisbee. A disaster committee was also formed under the direction of Dr. E. L. Brown (1885-1967) assisted by two grocers, Phillip Burns and Myron C. Bryant (1902-1961), with numerous committees selected to assist this effort. The police were organized in support of this campaign with Frank Hunt (1887-1959) serving as chairman and William S. Hastings (1901-1943), his assistant.

By February 1942, the *Citizen* was announcing that it was giving free subscriptions to men and women in the service



(later discontinued because of the numbers involved, special subscription rate of \$1 substituted for persons in the service.) The following month the Town of Bethel voted to raise \$1000 for Civil Defense. The town reports for the war years frequently mention the shortage of equipment and parts to keep public services operating smoothly. Also critical was enough manpower to keep the rolls of the fire department full; many men were lost to the Selective Service and the lure of high-paying war production jobs on the Maine coast.

It was at about this stage of the war that the first blackout trials were made with mixed success according to the account in the *Citizen*. The use of blackout curtains and the prescribed dimming of automobile lights did not receive universal endorsement, at least in these formative months. Also occurring at this time was the announcement that all twelve gauge shotguns were now reserved for government use. The war effectively eliminated the gun and ammunition business of H. I. Bean (1871-1952) on Spring Street.

Of human interest was the article that appeared in early 1942 in the *Citizen* on Mrs. H. E. Merrill of East Bethel, who had four sons in the service. Patriotic response seems to have been growing since the Red Cross had little difficulty raising over \$1200 in a matter of weeks. A paper drive by the Boy Scouts yielded \$37.53, and the P.H. Chadbourne children contributed over \$9 in nickels and dimes to the town's war effort.

Alder River Grange #145 in East Bethel initiated a unique means of raising money for the purchase of defense bonds. It required each member to wear some kind of costume at meetings; those who did not were fined five cents; this money was dedicated to buying bonds. Farmers in the Bethel area were urged by the Grange and other farm organizations to support the war effort with Victory production, which often was plagued by shortages of labor and supplies.

By the spring of 1942 air raid wardens were announced, as well as firemen, auxiliary firemen, police and messengers. The Home Guard was soon absorbed by the State Guard. Members were still required to furnish their own firearms but would be paid if called up by the governor.

Wartime propaganda began to appear regularly in the *Citizen* and no doubt in other media as well. One advertisement during this period displayed a Japanese face with the caption "Wipe the sneer off his face, buy U.S. savings bonds and savings stamps." It was urged that 10% of everyone's income be spent on defense bonds and stamps.

During the summer of 1942, the *Citizen* carried numerous pleas for people to conserve scrap metal and contribute to the drive that was now on. By the fall some nineteen tons of metal had been collected for Bethel's war effort and \$26,000 worth of bonds and stamps sold.

Introduced during the middle of 1942 was V-Mail, which brought information (usually on the personal side) from fighting men and women to Bethel. Mail service was unusually important during wartime, bringing news of loved ones to and from the town. One can only speculate on how much a letter from Maine lifted the morale of Bethel's servicemen and women or how much a message from the front reassured those at home. The *Citizen* carried instructions to anyone writing loved ones in the service not to dwell on the difficulties at home but to emphasize the positive side of things so as not to add to the cares of those engaged in the defense of the nation.

On a more public side of things was the establishment of an air raid warning center on Paradise (used until the fall of 1942) about where the James' house is today and one at the Buck farm

at Middle Intervale (near Raymond Buck's). These were manned by many volunteers headed by Elwood Ireland, Gould Academy Headmaster, who was given the title of chief observer. Participants in this operation received training in detecting enemy air craft, a distinctive blue and white armband and an observer pin.

Apparently interest in the operation at Paradise flagged and it did not reopen until February 1943 in greatly expanded form. The former judge's stand at Riverside Park was donated by Spanish American war veteran Henry Boyker (1879-1961) to be used as an observation post. It was renovated as a community project of the Bethel Lion's Club and placed near the site of the previous post. On July 4 of the same year it was dedicated formally to the memory of Stanley Allen, who had been killed at Pearl Harbor. With more than fifty in attendance, Gould Headmaster Ireland, serving as master of ceremonies, addressed those assembled and announced that Mrs. William J. Upson (1879-1955) had donated a flag for the post. F. Edward Hanscom was selected as assistant chief observer and Constance Philbrook, as secretary. According to Daisy LeClair's diary, the post closed permanently in October 1943.

*(To be continued in the next issue).*

## BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAMS 1986

January 2, Annual "So You Think You Know Bethel"; February 6, Reception for *East Bethel Road* book, slide presentation "Historic Views of East Bethel"; March 6, Historical Film Festival; April 3, Film "Search for a Century"; May 1, "Highlights of the History of Bethel's Mechanic Street"; June 5, Bicentennial Dancers, Demonstrations and History, 18th Century Ballroom Music; July 3, Annual Picnic, Eric Wight "Archaeology and Indians"; August 7, Slide Presentation, "Gould Academy: The First 150 Years"; September 4, 21st Annual Meeting; October 2, Annual "What's It", Film "Glorious System of Things"; November 6, Margaret Joy Tibbetts, "Highlights of Gratton (Maine) History"; December 4, Annual Christmas Meeting, Films: "Christmas on Grandfather's Farm" and "Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus." The annual picnic in July and the pot luck supper preceding the annual meeting begin at 6:30 p.m. All monthly meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Society's Broad Street headquarters, the Dr. Moses Mason House.

## BOOK REVIEW

Kenneth M. Morrison, *THE EMBATTLED NORTHEAST: THE ELUSIVE IDEAL OF ALLIANCE IN ABENAKI-EUROAMERICAN RELATIONS* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984) 256 pp., \$24.95 cloth.

Dr. Kenneth Morrison has written a scholarly study of relations between Indians and white men (English and French) in colonial Maine and western New Brunswick from the earliest beginnings through the first third of the eighteenth century. The destruction of Norridgewock in 1724 by settlers from Massachusetts was a burning point - in effect the beginning of the eventual domination of the northeast by colonizers of English descent; it also signalled a real beginning of the retreat of the Indians into Canada, which led in time to their near extinction in Maine. As we know from Bethel's own history the process of Indian withdrawal was long; it was to be more than a hundred years before they disappeared entirely from the fringes of the settlements of early Maine. This book is a valuable reminder of realities of life in the wilderness as well as

a painful documentation of the insensitivity, greed and at times wanton cruelty with which our forebears treated the Indians.

Dr. Morrison makes a real contribution in his accounts of the Indian way of life. He has delved deeply into the available sources, including Indian folklore. The Indians in the area were closely organized into relatively small tribes. Their life was primitive in its material aspects and dependent upon hunting, fishing, trapping and a few small crops; there was a frequent danger of famine. They lived without concepts of private property, political authority or written law. They were, however, by no means undeveloped morally or spiritually. Human beings were to be judged by good or bad acts. A cultural folk hero, Gluskap, had imposed certain rules which everyone must follow. These rules emphasized magnanimity and social cooperation as well as rules for dealing with the environment. Aided by his grandmother, Woodchuck, Gluskap brought to mankind such gifts as snowshoes and canoes and emphasized the responsibility of caring for others; young unmarried braves, for example, were to hunt for elderly widows unable to secure food for themselves.

Unfortunately for the Indians they possessed what the white men wanted, furs and land; because the Indians were not organized into a formal government which the white settlers recognized, it was assumed that they were savages and it was permissible to treat them in any way the white men wanted. In the beginning, the Indians were friendly and looked to a cooperative relationship, for they recognized almost immediately the utility of the white men's tools. But in most cases, friendly overtures were met with captivity, slavery, pillage and murder. Even those white men who did not participate personally in such cruelty were reluctant to discipline effectively or else excused the offenders since the Indians were generally considered savages. One such instance occurred in the 1660s when some English settlers upset a canoe with an Indian woman and a baby in it because they wanted to see if Indians knew how to swim naturally; the baby drowned and the outraged father, Squando, declared war. The official correspondence to the authorities on the incident was highly critical of Squando on grounds the baby would have died anyway. The result was Indian resistance and war from the seventeenth century on.

(continued on page 8)



*"FROM STUMP TO SHIP," a 1930s documentary film on logging in Maine, was shown in Bethel on October 3, 1985 in Gould Academy's Bingham Hall. Sponsored by the Society in cooperation with the University of Maine at Orono and the Northeast Archives of Folklore and Oral History with funding from the Maine Humanities Council and Champion International Corporation, the film attracted the largest audience ever gathered for a Society monthly meeting (approximately 500). Photographed above by Society Trustee Donald S. Brown from left to right are Dr. Edward D. Ives, Director of the Northeast Archives of Folklore and Oral History at UMO (discussion leader), Karan Sheldon and David Weiss (producers) in the meeting room of the Dr. Moses Mason House during the reception that followed the film.*

#### **SOCIETY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES**

Alden T. Kennett, President; Marvin Ouwinga, Vice-President; Charles F. Raymond, Secretary and Clerk of the Trustees; Mary C. Keniston, Treasurer; Trustees: Persis Post, Ruth Wight, Donald Bennett, Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Donald S. Brown.

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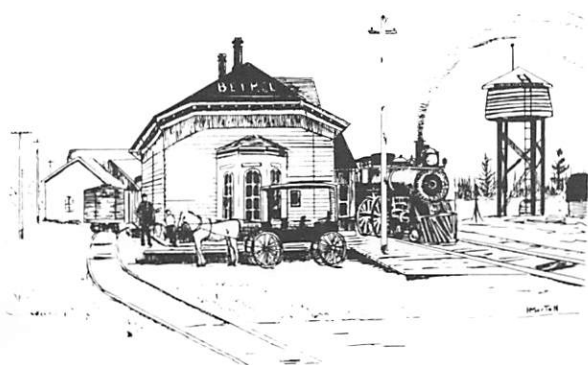
The only exception to the tales of the insensitivity and greed with which the white men reacted to Indians came from Jesuit missionaries. In the late 17th century a number of Jesuit priests made friends with the Indians, learned their language and eventually converted them to Christians. The Jesuits were initially intent only upon converts but in some instances they came to value the Indians for themselves and to sympathize with them. In any case, they were not too demanding in their conversions — the Indians adapted to Christianity by rationalizing that the Great Spirit had been responsible for the origin of the world but had been willing to take Gluskap's advice about its day to day arrangements. In the long run the Jesuits' friendship, which led to a closer relationship between the French and the Indians, deepened the enmity of the English. The French officials tried hard to use the Indians in their imperial wars against the English, and the English suspicions of the Indians were intensified. In any case the Indians were doomed.

Once past the Introduction which is heavily dosed with the jargon in favor with some ethnohistorians, this is an interesting and valuable book even though harrowing reading for anyone with a conscience. The Indian reaction to mistreatment led to resistance and war, and these Indian raids, as Dr. Morrison rightly points out, haunted the New England imagination for generations and struck terror in many settlers. His sources are excellent and the story is one which we should not forget. The early settlers who cheated and lied, who repeatedly broke treaties and sold whiskey despite promises to the contrary do not resemble the traditional pictures of Pilgrims striding to church with a musket over their shoulders or the Puritan dream of building the new City of God in New England. But both pictures of early New England have their reality. One Jesuit priest was surprised to find that the Indians considered themselves superior and asked an Indian why. The Indian reply was: "You never cease fighting and quarreling among yourselves; as for ourselves, we live in peace; you are envious of each other; you are thieves and liars; you are covetous without generosity or mercy..."

Margaret Joy Tibbetts

*Margaret Joy Tibbetts, former U.S. Ambassador to Norway, is a native of Bethel and holds a Ph.D. in history from Bryn Mawr; she has been chairman of the Society's Board of Trustees since 1975.*

The Bethel Historical Society  
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## IN MEMORIAM

Died, November 1985, Walter Scott of Dorchester, MA and Bethel summer visitor for over thirty years, longtime Society member (since 1966) and enthusiastic volunteer.

## NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Ann B. Carlson, Friendship, is retired and the granddaughter of Dr. Francis Tuell, Bethel's longtime dentist.

Bruce Hazelton, Cumberland Center, is a businessman and member of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Historical Society.

Richard Rasor, Bethel, is the owner of the Bethel Inn.

Martha Von Zintl, Bethel, is now retired but for many years operated one of Bethel's most successful restaurants, "Martha's."

Walter and Nancy Whittier, Falmouth, are retired and have been members of the Society since 1984.

Priscilla Carver Wiley, Katanah, New York, is a Bethel native and Gould Academy graduate, class of 1945.

## SOCIETY RECEIVES BEQUEST

A generous bequest has been received from the estate of the late Ruth Carver Ames, a life member of the Society and generous donor. Mrs. Ames died in February and the Society received the bequest in August. As no restrictions were placed on the disposition of this gift, the Board of Trustees of the Society at a meeting in the fall voted to transfer this money to the permanent endowment fund in Mrs. Ames' memory.

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